

REMARKS

Claims 107, 109, and 111 have been amended herein. Claims 83-93, 100-102, 106, and 107-111 will be pending in the application following entry of the above amendments.

The following remarks are responsive to the Office action dated January 2, 2008.

Claim 107

Amended claim 107 is directed to a disposable absorbent article having a longitudinal axis, a lateral axis, and a lateral centerline generally defining longitudinal front and back regions of the article. The article has a front end, a back end, a front portion, a back portion, and a middle portion interconnecting the front and back portions. The article comprises:

a liner adapted for contiguous relationship with a wearer's body;

an outer cover in generally opposed relationship with the liner, the outer cover having a length and a width and being stretchable along substantially the entire length of the outer cover;

the article having a surface area defined at least in part by said outer cover; and

an absorbent core disposed between the liner and the outer cover and having a front edge, a back edge, and a surface area which is less than about 50% of the surface area of the article, the absorbent core being disposed at least in said front portion and said middle portion of the article, the surface area of the absorbent core being greater in said front portion of the article than in said back portion and said middle portion, the surface area of the absorbent core being

greater in said middle portion of the article than in said back portion, the front edge of the absorbent core being in a closer proximity to the front end of the article than the back edge of the absorbent core is to the back end of the article, at least a portion of the absorbent core being bonded to said outer cover.

Claim 107, as amended herein, is submitted to be nonobvious in view of and patentable over the references of record, and in particular U.S. Patent No. 5,904,673 (Roe et al.) in view of PCT Patent Application Publication No. WO 00/38913 (Morman et al.) and EP Patent Application Publication No. 0 650 714 (Divo et al.), in that whether considered alone or in combination the references fail to show or suggest an article having an absorbent core with a surface area that is greater in the front portion of the article than in the back portion and the middle portion, and greater in the middle portion of the article than in the back portion.

Roe et al. disclose an absorbent article (e.g., a diaper) 20 having a generally "T-shape" comprising a liquid impervious topsheet 24, a liquid impervious backsheet 26, an absorbent core 28 between the topsheet and backsheet and an extensible waist belt 32. However, there is no disclosure or suggestion found anywhere in Roe et al. that the absorbent core 28 has a surface area that is greater in the front portion of the article than in the back portion and the middle portion, and greater in the middle portion of the article than in the back portion. Rather, in each of the illustrated embodiments (see Figs. 1, 3 and 4 of Roe et al.), the surface area of the absorbent core 28 is substantially the same in both the front and middle portions of the diaper 20.

The secondary references of Morman et al. and Roe et al. likewise fail to teach or suggest an article having an

absorbent core with a surface area that is greater in the front portion of the article than in the back portion and the middle portion, and greater in the middle portion of the article than in the back portion. Since each of the cited references fail to teach or suggest this feature individually, a combination of these references would likewise fail to teach or suggest this feature of amended claim 107.

For these reasons, amended claim 107 is submitted to be nonobvious in view of and patentable over Roe et al in view of Morman et al. and Divo et al.

Claims 83-94, 100-102, 106, and 108 depend directly or indirectly from amended claim 107 and are submitted to be patentable over the references of record for the same reasons as claim 107.

Claim 109

Amended claim 109 is directed to a disposable absorbent article having a longitudinal axis, a lateral axis, and a lateral centerline generally defining longitudinal front and back regions of the article. The article has a front end, a back end, a front portion, a back portion, and a middle portion interconnecting the front and back portions. The article comprises:

a liner adapted for contiguous relationship with a wearer's body, the liner having a length and a width and being stretchable along substantially the entire length of the liner;

an outer cover in generally opposed relationship with the liner;

the article having a surface area defined at least in part by said liner; and

an absorbent core disposed between the liner and the outer

cover and having a front edge, a back edge, and a surface area which is less than about 50% of the surface area of the article, the absorbent core being disposed at least in said front portion and said middle portion of the article, the surface area of the absorbent core being greater in said front portion of the article than in said back portion and said middle portion, the surface area of the absorbent core being greater in said middle portion of the article than in said back portion, the front edge of the absorbent core being in a closer proximity to the front end of the article than the back edge of the absorbent core is to the back end of the article, at least a portion of the absorbent core being bonded to said liner.

Amended claim 109 is submitted to be nonobvious in view of and patentable over the references of record, and in particular Roe et al. in view of Morman et al. and Divo et al. for the same reasons as those set forth above with respect to claim 107. That is, whether considered alone or in combination the references fail to show or suggest a disposable absorbent having an absorbent core with a surface area that is greater in the front portion of the article than in the back portion and the middle portion, and greater in the middle portion of the article than in the back portion.

Claim 110 depends directly from amended claim 109 and is submitted to be patentable over the references of record for the same reasons as claim 109.

Claim 111

Amended claim 111 is directed to a disposable absorbent article having a longitudinal axis, a lateral axis, and a lateral centerline generally defining longitudinal front and

back regions of the article. The article has a front end, a back end, a front portion, a back portion, and a middle portion interconnecting the front and back portions. The article comprises:

- a liner adapted for contiguous relationship with a wearer's body;

- an outer cover in generally opposed relationship with the liner, at least one of said liner and said outer cover being stretchable in at least one direction, the article having a surface area defined at least in part by at least one of said liner and said outer cover; and

- an absorbent core disposed between the liner and the outer cover and having a front edge, a back edge, and a surface area which is less than about 50% of the surface area of the article, the absorbent core being disposed at least in said front portion and said middle portion of the article, the surface area of the absorbent core being greater in said front portion of the article than in said back portion and said middle portion, the surface area of the absorbent core being greater in said middle portion of the article than in said back portion, the front edge of the absorbent core being in a closer proximity to the front end of the article than the back edge of the absorbent core is to the back end of the article, said at least one of said liner and said outer cover extending beyond the front and back edges of the absorbent core and being stretchable adjacent said front and back edges.

Amended claim 111 is submitted to be nonobvious in view of and patentable over the references of record, and in particular Roe et al. in view of Morman et al. and Divo et al. for the same reasons as those set forth above with respect to claim 107. That is, whether considered alone or in combination the

references fail to show or suggest a disposable absorbent having an absorbent core with a surface area that is greater in the front portion of the article than in the back portion and the middle portion and greater in the middle portion of the article than in the back portion.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, applicants respectfully request favorable consideration and allowance of claims 83-93, 100-102, 106, and 107-111 as now presented. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency or overpayment of any required fee during the entire pendency of this application to Deposit Account No. 12-384.

Respectfully submitted,

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Via EFS